



## AGENCY FOR HEALTHCARE RESEARCH AND QUALITY



### **MEPS DATA USERS' WORKSHOP TWO-DAYS HANDS-ON (Computers provided on Day 2)**

**TUESDAY, April 28, 2015  
WEDNESDAY, April 29, 2015**

**9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

**AHRQ CONFERENCE CENTER  
540 Gaither Road  
Rockville, MD, 20850**

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AHRQ is conducting a two-day workshop to facilitate the use of the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey, Household Component (MEPS-HC) by the health services research community.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this two-day workshop is to facilitate the use of the Medical MEPS-HC public use data files by the health services research community by providing both practical information about MEPS files and an opportunity to construct analytic files with the assistance of AHRQ staff. The workshop can accommodate approximately **50** participants.

### **Who should attend?**

This workshop is designed for health services researchers from any industry who have a background or interest in medical expenditures and conditions or an interest in using health surveys.

### **Program requirements**

Day 1 of the workshop is introductory and covers various MEPS topics in lecture format followed by Q & A and open discussion. All participants would benefit from reading the MEPS survey background ([http://meps.ahrq.gov/mepsweb/about\\_meps/survey\\_back.jsp](http://meps.ahrq.gov/mepsweb/about_meps/survey_back.jsp)) prior to attending the workshop. On Day 2, a PC will be provided for each participant. All work on the PCs will be conducted in SAS. Because the main purpose of this second day of the workshop is to provide participants with an opportunity to construct analytic files, participants with a working knowledge of SAS will benefit most from the hands-on portion of the workshop - a basic knowledge of SAS is desirable, but not necessary. It is recommended that participants bring their specific research questions to be programmed and answered in order to benefit fully from the second hands-on day of the workshop. A removable media with the analytical file (in various stages of development) can also be brought to the workshop.

### **Program description**

Day 1 of the workshop will cover various MEPS topics in a lecture format. The lectures will include MEPS Household Component topics such as utilization, estimation, medical conditions file, prescription medicines file, and State estimates. There will also be an introduction to the MEPS Insurance Component. This day will consist of lectures on practical information about the survey design, file content, and other knowledge necessary to formulate research plans utilizing the various MEPS-HC files and linkage capabilities. Instructional and reference materials will be distributed and discussed as necessary. On Day 2 of the workshop, the main focus would be to get hands-on experience necessary for the construction of data files. All 2012 full-year public use data files will be available on each participant's PC. (Please note that non-public use data will not be available at the workshop.) File documentation, codebooks, and the MEPS survey instrument will be available electronically. If participants prefer hard copies of these materials, they can download these from the MEPS Web site and bring to the workshop. Participants will utilize this day to learn programming considerations while working with MEPS data, how to choose needed variables, and follow along a demonstration of SAS example. Participants can bring their own programming and research problems/questions pertaining to MEPS data. AHRQ staff will be on-site to answer content questions and provide programming assistance.

### **Contact information**

**For any other questions, please contact:**

**[workshopinfo@ahrq.hhs.gov](mailto:workshopinfo@ahrq.hhs.gov) or telephone: 301-628-3118**

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**Workshop At-A-Glance**

**Tuesday, April 28, 2015**

8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Registration

9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Introduction and Lectures

12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. Lunch (on your own)

1:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Lectures<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Overview of HCUP Databases and Resources 4:00-4:30 p.m. (optional attendance)

**Wednesday, April 29, 2015**

8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Registration

9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Interactive SAS Exercises

12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. Lunch (on your own)

1:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Hands-on Computer Lab

**Registration fee: No charge**

**Registration deadline: Friday, April 17, 2015,** (or when the maximum number of participants is reached)

**All attendees are encouraged to register by April 17, 2015, through the [registration link](#) or on the MEPS Web site. Registrations will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis with a maximum of 50 participants. Participants may register for and attend first day only. In order to attend the hands-on training on Day 2, participants must attend the lectures on Day 1 of the workshop. Once you have registered, you will receive an email confirmation. There is NO on-site registration.**

**AHRQ is offering this workshop free of charge to participants. Please be considerate and do not reserve a space unless you actually plan to attend. If plans change after the registration, please cancel your registration as soon as possible and so the space can be offered to someone else. (You can cancel your registration by accessing the URL in the registration confirmation email).**

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**LOGISTICAL FACTSHEET**

**Location:** AHRQ Conference Center in the Eisenberg Office Building, Redland Center  
540 Gaither Road  
Rockville, MD 20850-6649  
Telephone: 301-427-1406  
Fax: 301-427-1276

Map and directions to AHRQ: <http://www.ahrq.gov/cpi/about/directions/index.html>

**For security purposes, please be prepared to show a photo ID to enter the AHRQ facility.**

**Participants are responsible for their own travel arrangements, hotel accommodations, and meals.** There is a break room at AHRQ with vending machines. There are restaurants accessible within walking distance.

**Hotel Accommodations:** There are hotels within a 1-mile radius of the AHRQ building that can be found by searching on the Internet. Some local hotels offer shuttle service to the nearby Shady Grove Metro station and may also offer shuttle service from your hotel to AHRQ.

**Ground Transportation:** If you take **METRO** (the subway system for the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area), the free AHRQ shuttle leaves from the Shady Grove Metro station during the morning at every 15 and 45 minutes past the hour starting at 6:45 a.m. and will bring you directly to the AHRQ building. To reach the AHRQ shuttle, turn **left** after exiting the Metro fare gates at the Shady Grove station, go up the escalator—the shuttle will park to your immediate right. If you take the Metro bus instead of the AHRQ shuttle, take the route 63 or 66 bus from the Shady Grove station. The AHRQ building is located across the parking lot from the Market Place store at the corner of Redland and Gaither Roads.

**Parking:** **Parking** is available for free at the Eisenberg Office Building, Redland Center, 540 Gaither Road, Rockville, MD, 20850-6649. The lot is accessible through the main entrance on Gaither Road or the entrance on Redland Blvd.

**Shuttle/Taxi Services from Airports:** From **Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA)**, **Washington Dulles International Airport (IAD)**, and **Baltimore Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport (BWI)**:

- **Super Shuttle** 1-800-BLUE VAN (1-800-258-3826): Reservations should be made **in advance**.
- **The Airport Shuttle** 1-800-776-0323 or 410-381-2772: Reservations should be made **in advance**.

- **Taxicab:** Taxis are readily available outside the baggage claim areas of all local airports.

A direct trip from any of the three airports takes approximately one hour depending on traffic. Allow slightly more time to/from BWI and slightly less to/from DCA.

#### **Metro Subway Services:**

Metro farecards are magnetic cards purchased from machines located at the entrance to each station. The fares between stations are listed at the station entrance. Farecards can be purchased for any amount of money up to \$20.

From **Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA):** Board the Metro **Yellow Line** going toward the *Mount Vernon Square – 7th St-Convention Center* station. Transfer at the *Gallery Place-Chinatown* station to the **Red Line** toward *Shady Grove*. Exit at *Shady Grove* station. Travel time is 1 hour and 20 minutes.

From **Union Station/Amtrak:** Board the Metro **Red Line** toward *Shady Grove* and exit at the *Shady Grove* station. Travel time is approximately 50 minutes.

Once at the Shady Grove station, follow the directions provided in the Ground Transportation section above for free AHRQ shuttle service directions to the AHRQ Eisenberg Office Building.

An interactive map of the Metro subway system that allows you to click on any station name for information about that station is available on the Web at <http://www.wmata.com/index.cfm?forcedesktop=1>